

REMARKS

This response is intended as a complete response to the Office Action dated March 9, 2006. In view of the following discussion, the Applicants believe that all claims are in allowable form.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER AND NEW CLAIMS:

The Applicants thank the Examiner for his comments regarding the allowability of claims 27-30 if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 16 to respectively incorporate the limitations of claims 27 and 29, as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Applicants have cancelled claims 27 and 29 from the application and have amended claims 28 and 30 to maintain proper dependency. The Applicants have cancelled claims 3-5, 18-20, and 24-25 without prejudice.

In addition, the Applicants have added new claims 31-40 to the present application. The Applicants submit that these claims are supported by the specification and that no new matter has been added. Claims 31-32 depend from allowable claim 16 and claims 33-34 depend from allowable claim 1. Accordingly, the Applicants submit that these claims are allowable.

New independent claim 35 recites limitations similar to claim 1 as originally filed with the addition of limitations similar to allowable claim 27. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that no new search is required and that claim 35 is similarly allowable. Claims 36-40 depend from claim 35 and, therefore, are patentable at least for the same reasons. As such, the Applicants respectfully request allowance of new claims 31-40.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

§103 Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-10, 15-16, 18-22, and 26

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-10, 15-16, 18-22, and 26 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over United States Patent Application Publication 2001/0027023, issued October 4, 2001 to *Ishihara* (hereinafter *Ishihara*). The Applicants respectfully disagree. However, to expedite issuance of the present application, the Applicants

have amended independent claims 1 and 16 into allowable form as suggested by the Examiner and as discussed above. Accordingly the rejection is moot.

Thus, claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9-10, 15-16, 18-22, and 26, as amended, are patentable over *Ishihara*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

§103 Claims 2, 6, 13-14, 17, and 24-25

Claims 2, 6, 13-14, 17, and 24-25 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ishihara* in view of United States Patent Application Publication 2002/0151156, published October 17, 2002 to *Hallock, et al.* (hereinafter *Hallock*). However, in view of the amendments noted above, the present rejection is moot.

Thus, claims 2, 6, 13-14, 17, 24-25, as amended, are patentable over *Ishihara* in view of *Hallock*. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicants submit that all claims now pending are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issuance are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that any unresolved issues still exist, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Mr. Alan Taboada at (732) 935-7100 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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/ Alan Taboada /
Alan Taboada, Attorney
Reg. No. 51,359
(732) 935-7100
Moser IP Law Group
1040 Broad Street, 2nd Floor
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702